

**UC DAVIS**

Continuing and  
Professional Education | Human Services

# Motivational Interviewing

Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice






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## Objectives

Participants will

- Understand principles of change process
- Learn and identify motivators for change
- Learn the stages of change model
- Understand principles of motivational interviewing
- Learn and practice techniques to support change through the use of motivational interviewing

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## Class Exercise

Participants will visualize a change they've made in their own lives. In dyads, they will share with a partner:

1. The change they made
2. What factors motivated this change
3. The possible obstacles they faced in making this change
4. The current outcome of the change

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## Change Principles

1. Change is a process, not a discrete event
2. Every person goes at their own pace through the change process
3. People will change when the person is ready and determined to change
4. A person's readiness to change can be stimulated by increasing motivation
5. Confrontation can increase resistance and non-cooperation
6. Change effects feelings, thoughts, behaviors and relationships



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## Factors of Change

- MULTIDIMENSIONAL
- DYNAMIC AND FLUCTUATING
- INFLUENCED BY SOCIAL INTERACTION
- READINESS FOR CHANGE
- MOTIVATION CAN BE MODIFIED
- RESISTANCE TO CHANGE IS NATURAL
- AMBIVALENCE ABOUT CHANGE IS NATURAL



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## What is Motivation?

"Motivation is a state of readiness or eagerness to change which may fluctuate from one time to another....it is an internal state influenced by external factors."

"Motivation can be defined as the probability that a person will enter into, continue and adhere to a specific change strategy."

– William Miller and Stephen Rollnick, 1991

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### Elements that can Stimulate Motivation

- Anxiety or distress
- Significant life events
- Cognitive re-evaluation
- Positive external incentives
- Recognizing negative consequences
- Expression of empathy in social context

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### Worker Approaches

- Myth of Education: a degree doesn't mean you have the ability to help motivate
- Myth of Experience: not having been in the same situation doesn't mean you can't be helpful in the change process
- Helping the "unwilling" to become "willing"
- "Sitting in the parent's perspective" helps make the connection through empathy

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### APPROACHES

- ONE-UP: worker is the expert/authority
- ONE-DOWN: parent has "control"
- ONE-ONE: worker and parent are equals

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### Class Exercise

- Participants are divided into groups and each group is assigned an “element” that stimulates change. Each group brainstorms the ways in which the element might stimulate change
- Class reconvenes and each group shares their ideas with all class participants

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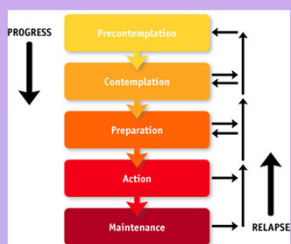
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### STAGES OF CHANGE



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### PRE-CONTEMPLATION

“What problem?”

- Partly or completely unaware that a problem exists
- Flashes of awareness that “something may not be right”
- Unaware that changes are needed
- May feel discouraged or resistant to change



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### CONTEMPLATION

“There may be a problem.”

- Growing awareness that a problem exists
- Growing perception and feeling of concern that problem will necessitate change
- Evaluation of their own behaviors
- Ambivalence and resistance is natural
- Think about the positive and negative reasons for making the change

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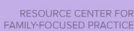
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### PREPARATION

“I am getting ready to deal.”

- Perceive change as advantageous
- Recognize the adverse effects of continuing the same behaviors
- Begin to do specific planning for change
- Examine their capabilities or capacity for change
- Aware of possible barriers to change and find strategies to overcome the barriers

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### ACTION

“I am dealing with the problem.”



- Choose definite strategies for the change
- Actively modifies their thoughts and behaviors
- Face specific barriers or challenges that may be obstacles to change
- Re-evaluate their self-concept and self-esteem as this relates to the change
- Alter strategies that are not working




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## MAINTENANCE

"I continue to deal with the problem."

- Efforts continue to sustain the changes made in the action stage
- Continued assessment of the environment to avoid obstacles for continued success
- Learn to detect and guard against "triggers" that may cause relapse
- Recognize that the process is not over but continues



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## RELAPSE

"Oops, I did it again."

- Identified as "temporary" and a normal part of human behavior
- Viewed as a "slip" and that one can re-establish the initial change process
- May go back to stages of contemplation, preparation, and action again
- Re-evaluation of "causes" contributing to the relapse
- Strategize about avoiding "triggers" in future

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## Class Exercise

Participants are asked to think of themselves in one of the stages of the change process related to a change they are making or have made. Physically line up across the room based on which stage of change they chose for this exercise. Group together in the various stages, and each person will state how their thoughts, feelings or behaviors fit the specific stage they have chosen.

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## TECHNIQUES OF MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING



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## Goals of Motivational Interviewing

- Prepare parent to make a change
- Reduce resistance to change
- Increase motivation for change
- Increase behavioral actions toward change



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## Motivational Interviewing Principles

- Does not assume that the parent is motivated
- Does not require the parent to comply, be aware or agree
- Employs specific strategies to build problem awareness and change motivation
- Supports parent's self-reliance
- Focus is on motivating change instead of on solutions

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## Empathy through Reflective Listening



- Communicates respect
- Accepts of parent's feelings and thoughts
- Encourages a non-judgmental collaborative relationship
- Allows parent-partner to be a supportive yet knowledgeable consultant
- Empathizing with the negative parts is harder

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## Developing Discrepancies

- Between parent's goals and the current behaviors
- Focus on how current behaviors can not achieve the parent's goals
- Separate the behavior from the person
- Connect what changes might enable parent to achieve the goals
- Use the "on the one hand...on the other hand" statement to describe discrepancy

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## Avoid Arguments and Direct Confrontation

- Arguments and confrontation do not enhance motivation
- View defensiveness and resistance as the parent's differing perspective
- Feedback regarding patterns and problems are given without judgment
- Suggestions, advice or shared knowledge are geared towards promoting change
- Increase belief in parent's capacity to change

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### "Roll" with Resistance Rather than Opposing It

- View resistance as the opportunity to respond in a new manner
- Use techniques of:
  - Reflection
  - Shifting Focus
  - Reframing
  - Admiring the Negative
  - Eliciting Change Talk
  - "Ruler of Readiness" Scale



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### Change Talk Listen for & Remark on Parent's:

- Recognition of the problem
- Concern about the current situation
- Statements of desire for change
- Expressions of optimism about change
- Recognition or elaboration of ambivalence
- Degree of willingness to change
- Confidence level towards making change
- Willingness to envision or experiment with change outcome
- Diminishment of fear towards change process
- Resolution of ambivalence or discrepancies

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### Questions that Promote Change Talk

- Do you remember a time things were going well? What was it like? What changed?
- What's the worst thing that could happen if you stay this way?
- If you could make things turn out the way you'd like, what would be different?
- In what ways does this concern you?
- What would be the advantage of making a change? Staying the way things are now?
- If you decided to make a change, what would it look like in the future?
- I sense you're feeling stuck. What needs to change?

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## Ruler of Readiness Scale

- Use a rating scale of 0 to 10 to determine the "importance" of the change or the parent's "confidence" level for change.
  - How important is this change to you?
  - How confident are you about changing?
- Importance/Confidence Continuum

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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## Ruler of Readiness Scale Continued

- Reinforce the parent's focus on their response by inquiring:
  - Straight question: "Why 5?"
  - Backward question: "Why 5 & not 2?"
  - Forward question: "What would need to happen in order to move you from 5 to 7 or 8?"
- Summarize responses using the parent's explicit words



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## Class Exercise

Participants are divided into groups and given scenarios. A participant role plays the parent and another the parent partner. All participants in the group develop statements they could verbalize based on the motivational interviewing techniques. The parent partner uses the statements developed in the mock encounter. Class reconvenes and processes the exercise.

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**PARENT PARTNER TASKS FOR  
EACH STAGE OF CHANGE**

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**Pre-Contemplation**

- Raise doubt about the behavior
- Increase knowledge related to the risks and problems with the current behaviors
- Assure the parent that the behaviors can be changed
- Avoid power struggles over defining the problem
- Link the behaviors as a contributing factor to what distresses the parent

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**Contemplation**

- Give reasons to change by listing the pros & cons of changing or not changing
- Recognize the parent's ambivalence about not changing
- Instill realistic hope for change
- Strengthen the parent's belief that they can change
- Provide information about negative consequences should change not occur



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## Preparation

- Itemize required steps that it would take to make the change
- Provide information about community and professional help to make the change
- Help parent identify barriers to change
- Help parent develop strategies to overcome those barriers to change
- Help parent come up with the best course of action to achieve the desired change

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## Action

- Support the parent to implement the necessary steps to make the change
- Help the parent confront the barriers that appear
- Constant validation and encouragement of parent's movement towards change
- Help the parent re-evaluate that steps are producing the desired result



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## Maintenance

- Help parent recognize that process is not over
- Help parent determine what strategies will help continue the new behaviors
- Help parent to expand their abilities to identify and overcome potential barriers
- Help parent anticipate risks that could lead to relapse and how to prevent relapse

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## Relapse

- Identify this situation as temporary and sometimes as a part of changing behaviors
- Help parent go back through the stages of contemplation, preparation and action
- Help prevent the parent from becoming demoralized with high levels of support and encouragement
- Help the parent reevaluate what barriers were overlooked & how to avoid in future



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## Tailoring Interventions from the Ruler of Readiness Scale

If parent places self on scale at 0 to 3:

1. Raise awareness of risks
2. Elicit change talk
3. Encourage exploration of pros
4. Ask permission to give feedback
5. Acknowledge difficulty in making decisions
6. Emphasize that there are choices

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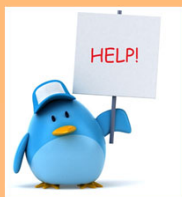
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## Useful Questions

- What would need to happen for you to think about change?
- How can I help you look at the different options for change?
- What might need to be different in your life for you to consider making this change in the future?



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## Parent places self 4 to 6

- Explore the parent's ambivalence
- Elicit change talk
- Build readiness
- Give information as appropriate related to pros and cons of change
- Ask about next steps

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## Useful Questions

- What are some reasons you would want things to stay the same?
- What are some reasons for making the change at this time? Or sooner rather than later?
- What do you like about \_\_\_\_\_?
- What do you not like about \_\_\_\_\_?
- What could help you move to the next step for this change?



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## Parent places self on scale: 7 to 10

- Strengthen commitment to change
- Continue to elicit change talk
- Help parent set specific and achievable goals
- Help parent identify a strategy or plan
- Reinforce chosen options for the plan
- Help parent identify possible barriers and ways to avoid 'slips' or relapse

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## Useful Questions



- How might your life be different if you made this change?
- What is your strongest reason for the change?
- What would be your first step in the change process?
- What barriers might you encounter when making the change?
- How might you work around the barriers?

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## Closing an Encounter with Confidence Statements

- Genuine
- Succinct
- Realistic
- Support Self-Reliance



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## Confidence Statement Examples

- I am confident that should you chose to change \_\_\_\_\_, you will develop a plan to suit your situation.
- I feel certain that as you think about this change more, you'll figure out an approach that is workable for you.
- I feel positive that you will find a strategy in order to change \_\_\_\_\_.
- It appears that you are determined to begin working on the plans to change \_\_\_\_\_.

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## Traps to Avoid

- “Expert” role
- Unsolicited advice or trying to fix the parent
- Prematurely focusing on a topic or stage of change
- Question and answer sessions
- Confrontation, arguing, blaming or labeling
- Close-ended questions

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## Class Exercise

Class is divided in half and each side takes turns in identifying which “stage of change” corresponds with a specific statement or idea that can be used in motivational interviewing techniques. Conducted like a game show, so if one side is not able to identify the correct stage of change, then other side gets a chance to do so.

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Thank you for attending!

Have a great day!

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